

# **DRAFT**

# **James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area**

**Ten-Year Area Management Plan  
FY 2016-2025**



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## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area, #5501
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1952
- **Acreage:** 3,084 acres
- **County:** Jackson
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife, Design and Development
- **Statements of Purpose:**

### A. Strategic Direction

The primary purpose of the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area (WA) is to provide Kansas City Metropolitan residents with outdoor recreational opportunities, including fishing, hunting, dog training, field trialing, field archery, nature study, and wildlife observation while protecting water quality and providing a variety of wildlife habitats.

### B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future condition of the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area is healthy woodland, aquatic, and grassland communities that include a diversity of habitat complexes mixed with agricultural fields that are managed by best management practices with a reduced amount of invasive species across all habitats.

### C. Federal Aid Statement

This area, or a portion thereof, was acquired with Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds to restore and manage wildlife, conserve and restore suitable wildlife habitat, and provide public access for hunting or other wildlife-oriented recreation.

This area, or a portion thereof, was acquired with Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration funds to restore and manage sport fish, conserve and restore sport fish habitat (or a buffer to protect that habitat) and provide public access for sport fishing.

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

### I. Special Considerations

A. **Priority Areas:** East Fork of Big Creek Priority Watershed

B. **Natural Areas:** None

C. **Other:**

- Dove Emphasis Study Area - An adaptive resource management experiment to address uncertainties related to dove harvest management. The long-term goal is to examine relationships between regulations, habitat management, hunting opportunities, and harvest.
- Field Trial Area – Hunting dog field trials are an acceptable use of Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) areas and may be allowed if

compatible with primary area resource management goals and uses. James A. Reed Memorial WA is a designated field trial area.

## **II. Important Natural Features and Resources**

- A. Species of Conservation Concern:** None observed.
- B. Caves:** None
- C. Springs:** None
- D. Other:** James A. Reed Memorial WA is in the Jackson County Prairie/Woodland Scarped Plain and Belton High Prairie Plain landtype associations within the Scarped Osage Plains Subsection. The Prairie/Woodland Scarped Plain landtype consists of broad gently rolling uplands that give way to limestone valleys with up to 200 feet of local relief. Historically, the area contained prairie-covered uplands that graded into oak savanna, and then into unique woodlands dominated by chinquapin and bur oaks in the scarped areas. Some limestone glades were present. The Belton High Prairie Plain landtype consists of high flat divides with a relief of less the 75 feet. This landtype was formerly prairie on loess over residual shale soils, but the current landscapes are nearly half cropland and half pastureland, where not urbanized on the south side of the Kansas City Metropolitan Area. (Nigh & Schroeder, 2002).

## **III. Existing Infrastructure**

### **Buildings:**

- Kansas City Regional Office: shop and storage building (built 2011), 1 parking lot (Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible)
- Reed Wildlife Shop: metal building (constructed 1952), Wildlife office, shop, open storage barn, sign barn (built 1978), chemical and fuel storage building
- Horse barn (pre 1952)
- Storage building (1957)

### **Lakes:**

- Plover Lake (15.2 acres): parking lot (ADA accessible), 4 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Jackrabbit Lake (31 acres): 2 parking lots (1 ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), fishing dock (ADA accessible), 5 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Catclaw Lake (42.2 acres): parking lot (ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), fishing dock (ADA accessible), 5 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Cottontail Lake (26.6 acres): 2 parking lots, 6 fishing jetties

- Nell Lake (31 acres): 4 parking lots (1 ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), 4 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Gopher Lake (42 acres): 3 parking lots, rental boats, 3 fishing jetties
- Bodarc Lake (14.5 acres): 2 parking lots (1 ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), 1 fishing jetty
- Bluestem Lake (14.7 acres): parking lot, 1 fishing jetty
- Coot Lake (22.4 acres): parking lot (ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), fishing dock (ADA accessible), 3 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Tanglewood Lake (5 acres): parking lot (shared with Coot Lake)
- Honker Pond (1 acre): parking lot
- Prairie Hollow Lake (7 acres): parking lot (ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), picnic pavilion with picnic tables (ADA accessible), fishing jetty and platform (ADA accessible)

**Trails:**

- Shawnee Trace Nature Trail: 2.5 miles, natural surface with 2 foot bridges
- Multi-use trails: 15 miles of horseback/bike/hike trails
- Lake fishing access trails: 15 miles of mowed access around 12 lakes

**Unmanned Archery Range:** 3 upper targets (ADA accessible), parking lot (ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), picnic pavilion (ADA accessible), picnic tables, 28-point field archery range

**Picnic Area and Horse Trailer Parking:** parking lot (ADA accessible), horse trailer parking lot, picnic pavilion with picnic tables, privy (ADA accessible), water hydrant

**Organized Youth Group Camping Area**

**Ponds:**

- Rearing ponds: 2 ponds at Lake Nell, 2 ponds at Coot Lake
- Unmanaged Ponds: 18 ponds

**James A. Reed Memorial Forest:** 2-acre forest planted in the memory of James A. Reed; plaque honoring Nell Reed

**Waterfowl Marsh:** 3 parking lots

**Silt Basins/Wetlands:** 14 pools

**Other Structures:**

- 7.5 miles of roads
- Automated security gate at front entrance (closed overnight)
- Pipe gates on Prairie Hollow Lake entrance and Jackson County water access easement
- 5 additional parking lots
- 2 sewage treatment facilities

**IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations**

**A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** Yes, there are restrictions related to area naming and use of the area (see deed for detailed information).

**B. Federal Interest:**

- Uses of land acquired with Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds may not interfere with the purpose for which it was acquired. Federal funds may also be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.
- Uses of land acquired with Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration funds may not interfere with the purpose for which it was acquired. Closures to sport fishing must be based on the recommendations of the state fish and wildlife agency for fish and wildlife management purposes. Federal funds may also be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.

**C. Easements:**

- Waterline easement - City of Lee's Summit
- Pipeline easement - Williams natural gas pipeline
- Drainage easement - City of Lee's Summit
- Access easement - Jackson County Water Department

**D. Cultural Resources Findings:** Yes, records kept with the Department Environmental Compliance Specialist. Managers should follow Best Management Practices for Cultural Resources found in the Department Resource Policy Manual.

**E. Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** None observed.

**F. Endangered Species:** None observed.

**G. Boundary Issues:** Establishing accurate and identifiable boundary markers is a priority for this property.

## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

### V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

The James A. Reed Memorial WA contains 2,799 acres of woodlands, grasslands, old fields, wetlands, agricultural fields and a small glade.

#### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) The wildlife area contains approximately 1,059 acres of woodlands, hedgerows and tree plantings (Figure 4). Management has solely been focused on the higher quality woodland sites. In these areas, invasive species remain a challenge. The hedgerows and tree plantings are of low quality and should be considered for renovation or removal.
- 2) Invasive plant species (fescue, sericea lespedeza, autumn olive and shrub honeysuckle) are a challenge on the entire area.
- 3) Approximately 300 acres of agricultural crops (of 589 agricultural acres) are planted annually (Figure 4). Cropping supplements natural food and provides cover to attract wildlife. This creates hunting and viewing opportunities for area users. A crop rotation is used to combat invasive plants, reverse succession, provide idle areas for ground-nesting birds, produce food (such as foxtail and ragweed), and attract insects to serve as food for a variety of birds.
- 4) The area contains approximately 1,133 acres of old field, grassland, and prairie plantings. Invading woody vegetation, exotic species and erosion issues (inherited from past farming practices) are the main management challenge. Opportunities exist for enhancing native plant species diversity and creating structural diversity that provides nesting opportunities and early successional vegetation for a wide variety of species.
- 5) The wildlife area contains 28 acres of detention basins that are managed as wetlands. These pools are opportunistic wetlands and have stop log structures for water manipulation.
- 6) Manage habitat for a diversity of species, including game species.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain healthy trees and woodlands with management emphasis on providing wildlife habitat for a diversity of species and providing outdoor recreational opportunities.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor forests and woodlands for invasive exotic vegetation, diseases and insects. Suppress infestations that may develop, concentrating on areas of better habitat potential. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Retain and protect existing den trees. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Stimulate groundcover and reduce woody competition in the understory. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Strategy 4:** Retain wooded riparian corridors to promote water quality and stream health. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Strategy 5:** Monitor hedgerows and tree plantings and explore opportunities for removal or renovation. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Management Objective 2:** Maintain 6-acre limestone glade.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor glade for invasive exotic vegetation, invasive woody vegetation and diseases. Manage any infestations that may develop using prescribed burns, mechanical disturbance and herbicide application. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 3:** Enhance old field and prairie plantings for grassland and shrubland wildlife.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor open lands for invasive exotic vegetation and invasive woody vegetation. Manage any infestations that may develop using prescribed burns, mechanical disturbance and herbicide application. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Provide early succession habitat using prescribed burns, mechanical disturbance and herbicide application. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 4:** Provide diverse vegetative structure and cover on agricultural lands.

**Strategy 1:** Use best management practices to reduce soil erosion. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Manage crop fields using the Department's Policy and Procedures Manual for Agricultural Land Use (aka Ag Crop program) and by utilizing permittee farming and area staff. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Suppress invasive exotic vegetation using permittee cropping (through the Ag Crop program), herbicide applications, and mechanical manipulation. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 4:** Rotate crops, plant sunflowers and wheat for dove field management and provide early successional idle fields for wildlife. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 5:** Maintain healthy wetland habitat.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain drainages to facilitate water manipulation and control beaver and muskrat populations to improve wetland management. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Control and set back woody succession using appropriate methods. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Monitor the area for invasive exotic species. Suppress any infestations that may develop using appropriate methods. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 6:** Promote hunting and managed hunt opportunities on the area.

**Strategy 1:** Conduct annual management activities that will provide habitat for a diversity of species. (Wildlife)

## **VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations**

The James A. Reed WA contains 12 fishable bodies of water totaling about 252 acres. The area also has one waterfowl marsh, 14 detention basins, and many other small ponds and fishless waterholes used by wildlife. There are 2.25 miles of permanent streams that flow through the area and several ephemeral creek channels.

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Much of the upper watershed of this area is largely developed into high-density residential lots and businesses. Land remaining undeveloped will likely be developed in the near future, increasing the potential for more run-off and erosion. A Missouri Stream Team has organized within the East Fork of Big Creek priority watershed, which includes the James A. Reed Memorial WA.
- 2) Manage aquatic vegetation to promote healthy lakes. Curly leaf pondweed, an invasive aquatic plant, is present in several area lakes. Excessive amounts of aquatic vegetation can lead to unbalanced fish populations and poor fishing. Large areas of shallow water can lead to an overabundance of aquatic vegetation and increase costs to manage our lakes.
- 3) Manage healthy fish populations. The lakes have catchable populations of largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, green sunfish, crappie, and channel catfish. Trout are stocked annually into Coot Lake, Plover Lake, and Honker Pond to provide a winter fishery and opportunity to catch a species that does not normally occur in this area.

**Management Objective 1:** Ensure quality watershed health in order to maintain water quality entering James A. Reed Memorial WA.

**Strategy 1:** Work with stakeholders, including farmers, city and county governments, homeowner associations and individual landowners to ensure watershed health. (Fisheries)



**Strategy 2:** Offer educational information to stakeholders looking for ways to protect water quality. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 3:** Partner with Missouri Stream Teams and other community groups to promote water quality on the wildlife area. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 4:** Protect riparian areas by leaving filter strips between streams and disturbed areas to protect water quality and habitat in streams and lakes. (Fisheries)

**Management Objective 2:** Create and maintain healthy fish populations and habitat.

**Strategy 1:** Use herbicide and grass carp to control unwanted aquatic vegetation in area lakes. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 2:** Use standardized sampling methods (e.g., electrofishing and trap netting) to evaluate fish populations, as needed. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 3:** Stock channel catfish, hybrid striped bass and trout to maintain populations in area lakes. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 4:** Propose fishing regulations, as needed, to sustain catchable populations of game fish species. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 5:** Add fish habitat structures, as needed, to promote fishing success. (Fisheries)

## **VII. Public Use Management Considerations**

James A. Reed Memorial WA is between the cities of Lee's Summit and Greenwood, 25 minutes from downtown Kansas City. The greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area has an estimated population of 2 million people with easy access to the area from U.S. Highway 50. The area receives heavy public use, estimated at a quarter-million visitations annually. This heavy use can create challenges in balancing the needs of different user groups and in protecting the area's resources. James A. Reed Memorial WA is a popular destination for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, dog training/field trials, and hiking/biking/horseback riding (with multiple trails providing miles of opportunity).

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Maintain fishing access. Many of the lakes are ADA-accessible and provide a diversity of fishing opportunities with easy access.
- 2) The size of the area, as well as the existence of healthy populations of game species, provide the public with several managed hunts and other hunting opportunities.

- 3) Maintain public recreational opportunities. The area receives high levels of competing public uses and is a popular place for hiking, biking, horseback riding, training sport-hunting dogs and holding dog field trials.
- 4) The 28-point archery range provides simulated practice for hunting situations and field target shooting opportunities.
- 5) The area is surrounded by sizable residential developments, which makes building relationships with neighboring landowners a challenge.
- 6) Maintain, promote and enhance educational and interpretive opportunities.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain public fishing access.

**Strategy 1:** Mow regularly around the lakes and dams to control woody vegetation and to maintain public access. (Fisheries, Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Maintain a limited number of rental boats on Gopher Lake. (Fisheries)

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain public fishing access.

**Strategy 1:** Mow regularly around the lakes and dams to control woody vegetation and to maintain public access. (Fisheries, Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Maintain a limited number of rental boats on Gopher Lake. (Fisheries)

**Management Objective 2:** Promote hunting and managed hunt opportunities on the area.

**Strategy 1:** Provide managed deer hunts to facilitate a healthy herd while providing hunting opportunities to the public. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Provide dove shooting field management and managed dove hunt opportunities for the public. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Provide waterfowl hunting opportunities. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 3:** Maintain and enhance trail systems at James A. Reed Memorial WA to provide quality hiking, biking, horseback riding and fishing access for the public.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain the Shawnee Trace Trail, multi-use trails and fishing access trails to provide quality access for the public. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Modify and update trails, as needed, to serve the public needs. Reduce trail maintenance, following the Department's guidelines for trail construction and improvement standards. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

**Strategy 3:** Give notice, on Department website and by signage, of trail or area closures that might affect trail and area access. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 4:** Maintain the area as a designated area for field trial opportunities, according to Department Regulations and Field Trial Policy.

**Strategy 1:** Take applications and issue special use permits for field trials as appropriate. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Communicate with field trial groups to modify field trial course in conjunction with management objectives to facilitate field trial events. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 5:** Manage and enhance the area archery shooting range to accommodate a variety of shooting opportunities in a way that promotes safe and responsible participation in hunting and shooting.

**Strategy 1:** Work with local Conservation Agents and law enforcement officials to ensure compliance of range regulations by area users. (Wildlife, Protection)

**Strategy 2:** Ensure the range is safe for public use and well maintained in accordance with the shooting range management guidelines. (Wildlife, Outreach and Education)

**Strategy 3:** Modify and update the archery range, as needed, to serve the public's needs or reduce maintenance according to shooting range guidelines. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

**Management Objective 6:** Promote recreational, educational and interpretive opportunities on the area.

**Strategy 1:** Promote compatible uses of hunting, fishing, birding, hiking and nature photography. (Wildlife, Fisheries, Outreach and Education)

**Strategy 2:** Inform the public of recreational opportunities (e.g., using brochures, Atlas database). (Wildlife, Fisheries)

**Strategy 3:** Maintain accurate area information and regulations. (Wildlife, Fisheries)

**Strategy 4:** Use Prairie Hollow Lake as the primary fishing area for the Discover Nature — Fishing Program. (Fisheries, Outreach and Education)

**Strategy 5:** Develop other areas on the James A. Reed Memorial WA that can handle special Discover Nature — Fishing programing, including Honker Pond and Bluestem Lake. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 6:** Use stockings of hybrid sunfish and catch-and-release fishing to maintain high catch rates during clinics. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 7:** Use the classroom in the Regional Office for Discover Nature — Fishing classes that do not require water resources to complete. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 8:** Communicate to teachers, students, resource agencies, scout groups, and youth groups the uniqueness of the area as a possible destination for ecology classes, school programs (e.g., Discover Nature Schools) and workshops. Issue

special use permits for groups requesting utilization. (Outreach and Education, Wildlife)

**Strategy 9:** Maintain interpretive signs to serve public education needs. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 10:** Continue to make the Kansas City Regional Office classroom available for education purposes and conservation group meetings. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 11:** Provide designated primitive camping locations for organized youth groups. Issue special use permits for groups requesting permission to camp. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 12:** Maintain designated areas and times for sport hunting dog training opportunities on the area. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 7:** Facilitate a good working relationship with neighboring landowners.

**Strategy 1:** Work with neighbors to minimize any boundary trespass or any other issues affecting James A. Reed Memorial WA or private property. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Promote best management practices on neighboring landowner properties. (Private Land Services)

## VIII. Administrative Considerations

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) The area receives high public use. Maintenance of the area and infrastructure demand a high degree of attention.
- 2) The area is surrounded by residential housing developments and any open land along the area boundary will continue to be developed. Continue to work with neighbors, homeowners, homeowner associations and city organizations to maintain good relationships.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain area infrastructure that is safe and inviting to the public.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain area infrastructure in accordance with the Department guidelines. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Follow dam maintenance according to Department maintenance guidelines. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

**Management Objective 2:** Maintain well-marked, accurate boundary lines.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain signs along boundary lines. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Obtain administrative guidance on resolving boundary issues.  
(Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Work with neighbors, homeowner associations; and city, county or state governments concerning boundary, water flow or other issues. (Wildlife, Fisheries, Private Lands)

**Lands Proposed for Acquisition:**

When available, adjacent land may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers or through donations. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered.

**MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE**

Strategies are considered ongoing

## APPENDICES

### **Area Background:**

The James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area is located in Jackson County, south of U.S. Highway 50, near Lee's Summit. The wildlife area was established in 1952 when Mrs. Reed donated 731 acres of land to the Department, in memory of her husband, Senator James A. Reed. Additional tracts were purchased using federal monies and Department funds to bring the area to its present 3,084 acres.

Development of the area and lake construction began in 1957. Over 250 acres of water have been impounded to form 12 lakes, ranging in size from 1 to 42 acres. Most lakes contain largemouth bass, channel catfish, crappie, bluegill, green sunfish, redear sunfish and bullheads. Striped bass hybrids have been stocked in several of the lakes. The area also has numerous small ponds.

Woodlands, native grass plantings, shrub plantings and cropfields are managed to provide year-round food and cover for wildlife. The area also supports good numbers of deer and turkey.

This wildlife area was acquired, developed and is managed in part through the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act and the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. From the original 731 acre donation of Nell Reed in the memory of James A. Reed, the Department has increased the area, by purchasing from willing sellers, to 2,353 acres of additional land, making the area its current 3,084 acres. Before the Department's ownership, the wildlife area was heavily grazed and cropped. Once the Department started managing the lands, native grass and forbs plantings, shrub and tree plantings, lakes, ponds and wetlands were placed on the landscape to increase habitat for wildlife. Unfortunately, a host of invasive species also found their way to the area, such as fescue, sericea lespedeza, autumn olive and shrub honeysuckle.

**Current Land and Water Types:**

<b>Land/Water Type</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Miles</b>	<b>% of Area</b>
Woodlands/Hedge Rows	1,059		34.3
Grasslands	685		22.2
Agricultural Fields	589		19.1
Old Fields	448		14.6
Open Water	252		8.2
Wetlands	28		0.9
Roads/Infrastructure	10		0.3
Forest	7		0.2
Glade	6		0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,084</b>		<b>100</b>
Stream Frontage		2.25	

**Public Input Summary:**

Prior to writing this draft area management plan, the Department conducted a public input process (the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage) from Sept. 1 – Nov. 30, 2014. The objective of this phase was to inform stakeholders about the area planning process and ask them to share their ideas. The public was notified through a James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Open House (held Nov. 5, 2014); brochures and comment stations at the wildlife area; the Department’s website; local newspapers and newsletters; emails sent to the Area Plan email list; and emails sent to neighboring landowners, non-governmental organizations, and local government offices. The Department received input from 68 respondents (see “James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage Public Input Summary” at [mdc.mo.gov/node/27589](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/27589)). The area management planning team took comments into consideration as they drafted this 10-year management plan. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they will be incorporated or why they will not be included, can be found in Appendix A.

**References:**

Nigh, T. A., & Schroeder, W. A. (2002). *Atlas of Missouri ecoregions*. Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Conservation.

**Maps:**

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Aerial Map with Easements

Figure 3: Topographic Map

Figure 4: Current Vegetation Map

**Additional Appendices:**

Appendix A: Department Responses to Public Comments – James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage



Figure 1: Area Map

## JAMES A. REED MEMORIAL WILDLIFE AREA

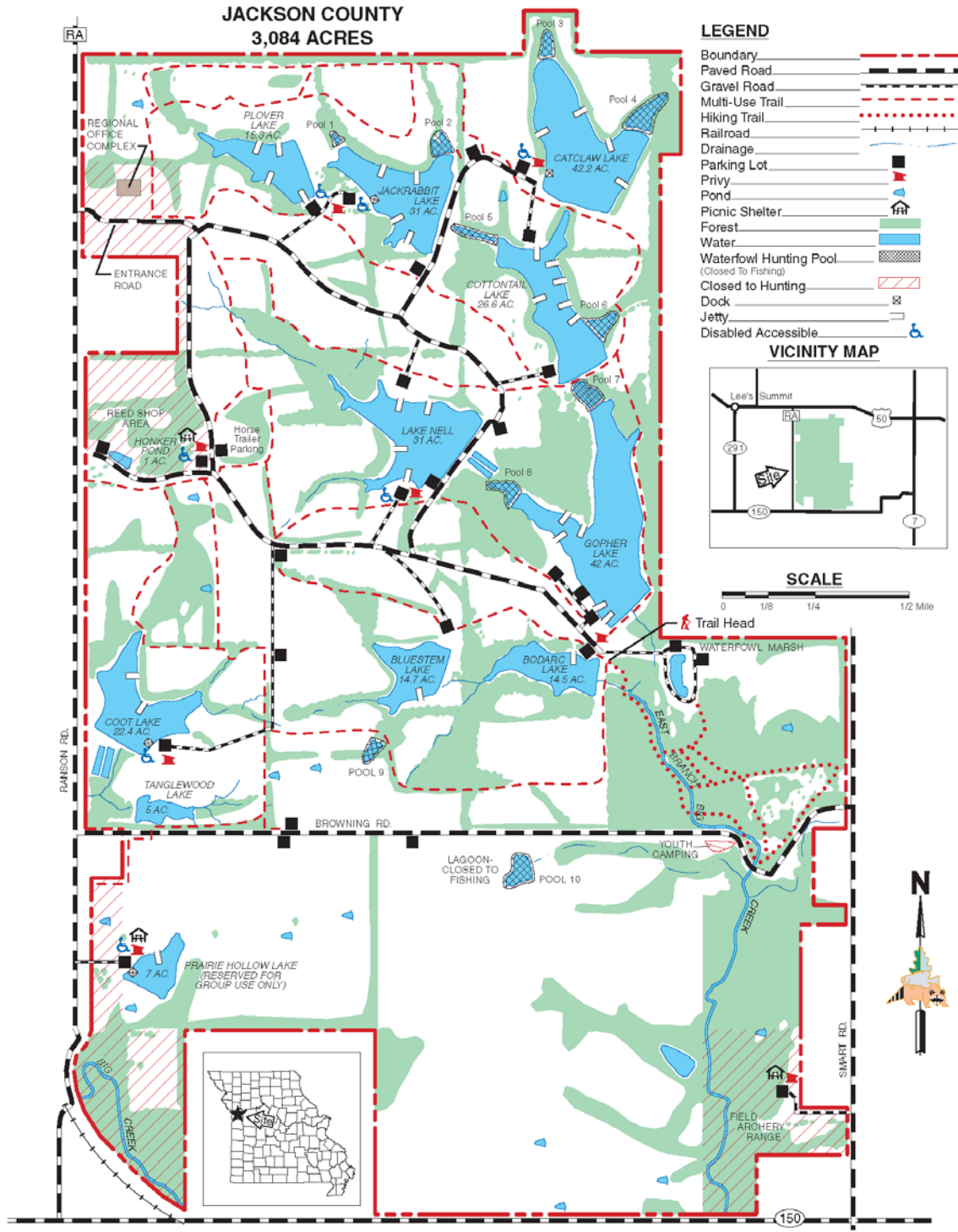


Figure 2: Aerial Map with Easements

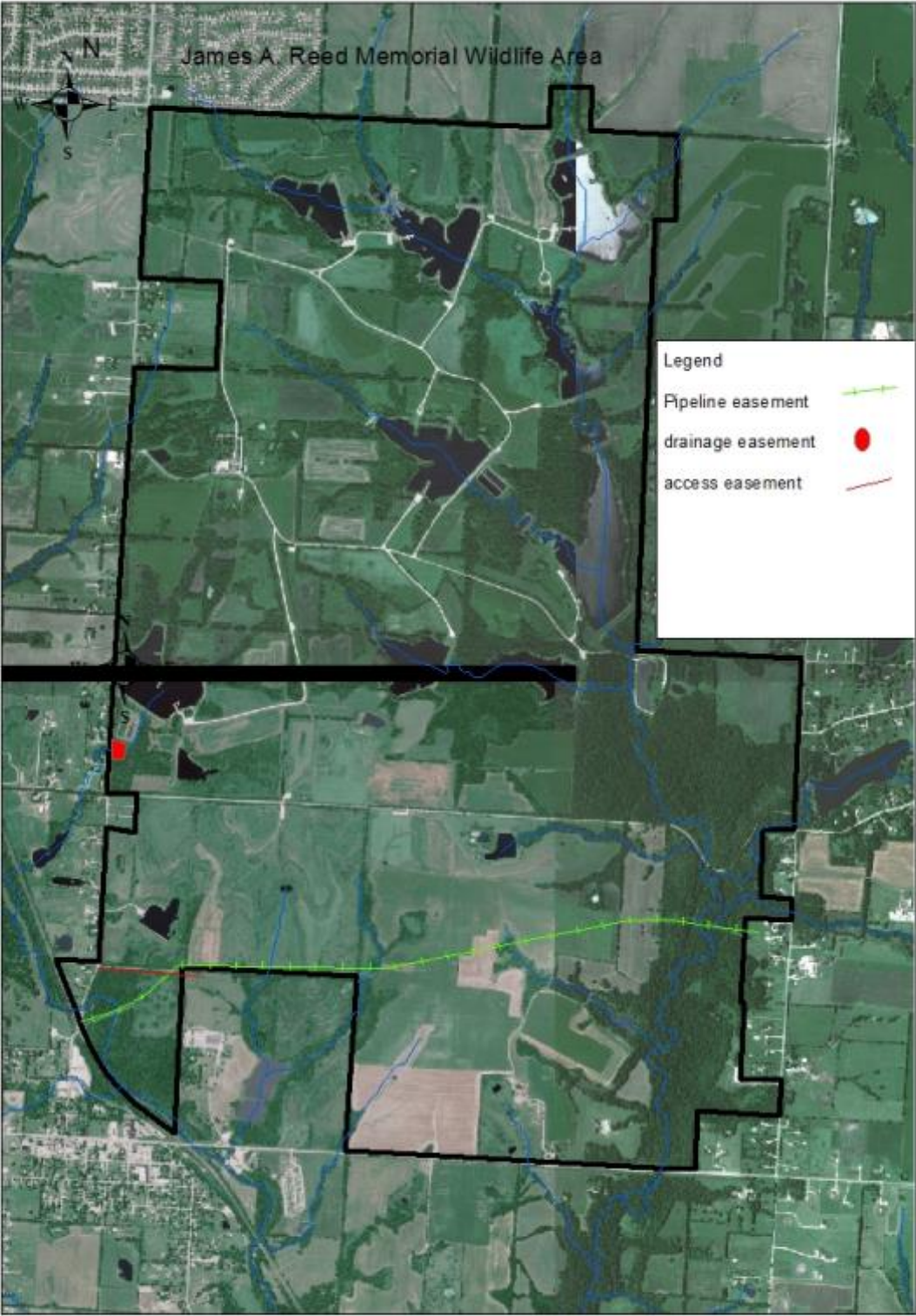
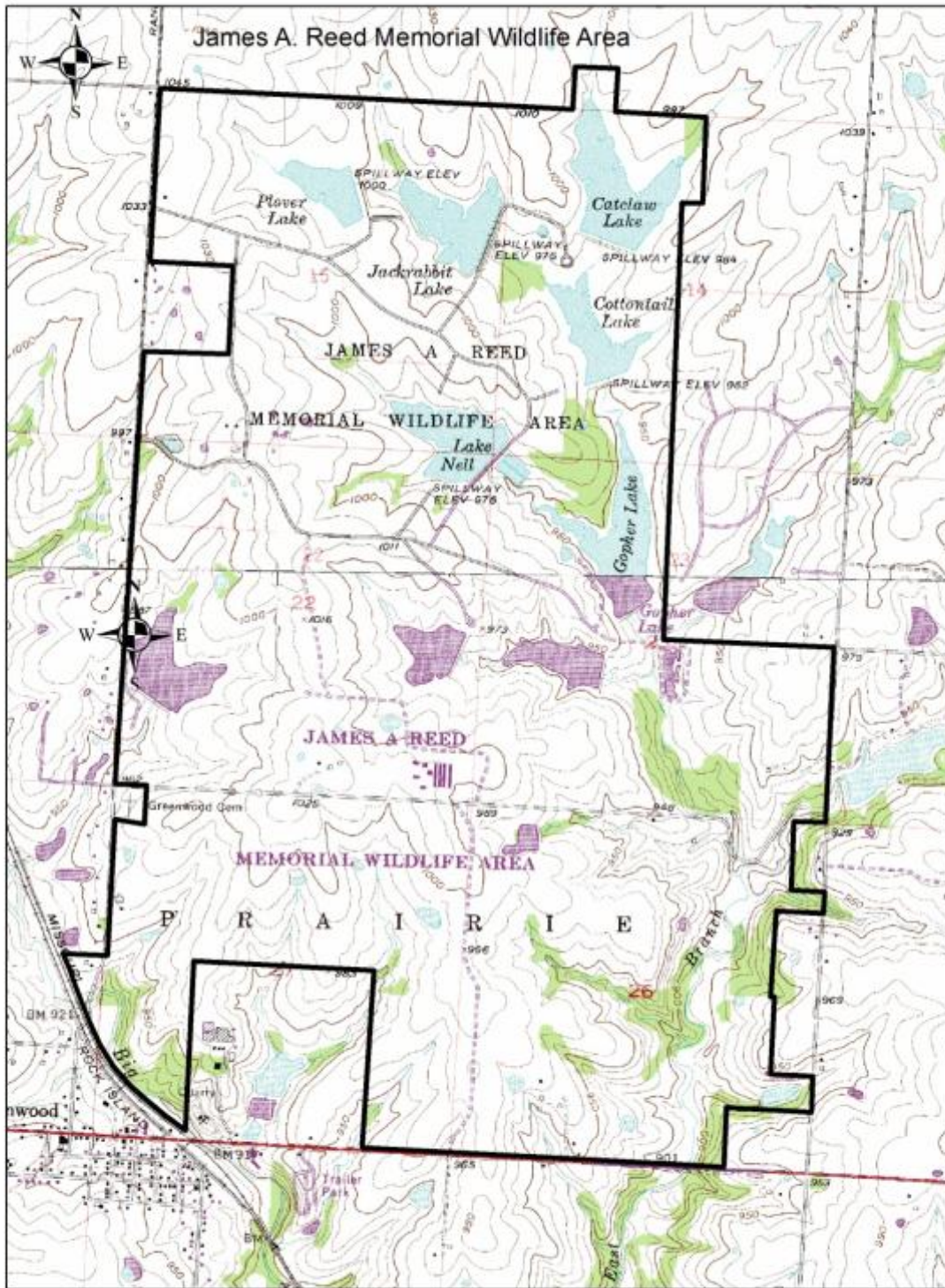


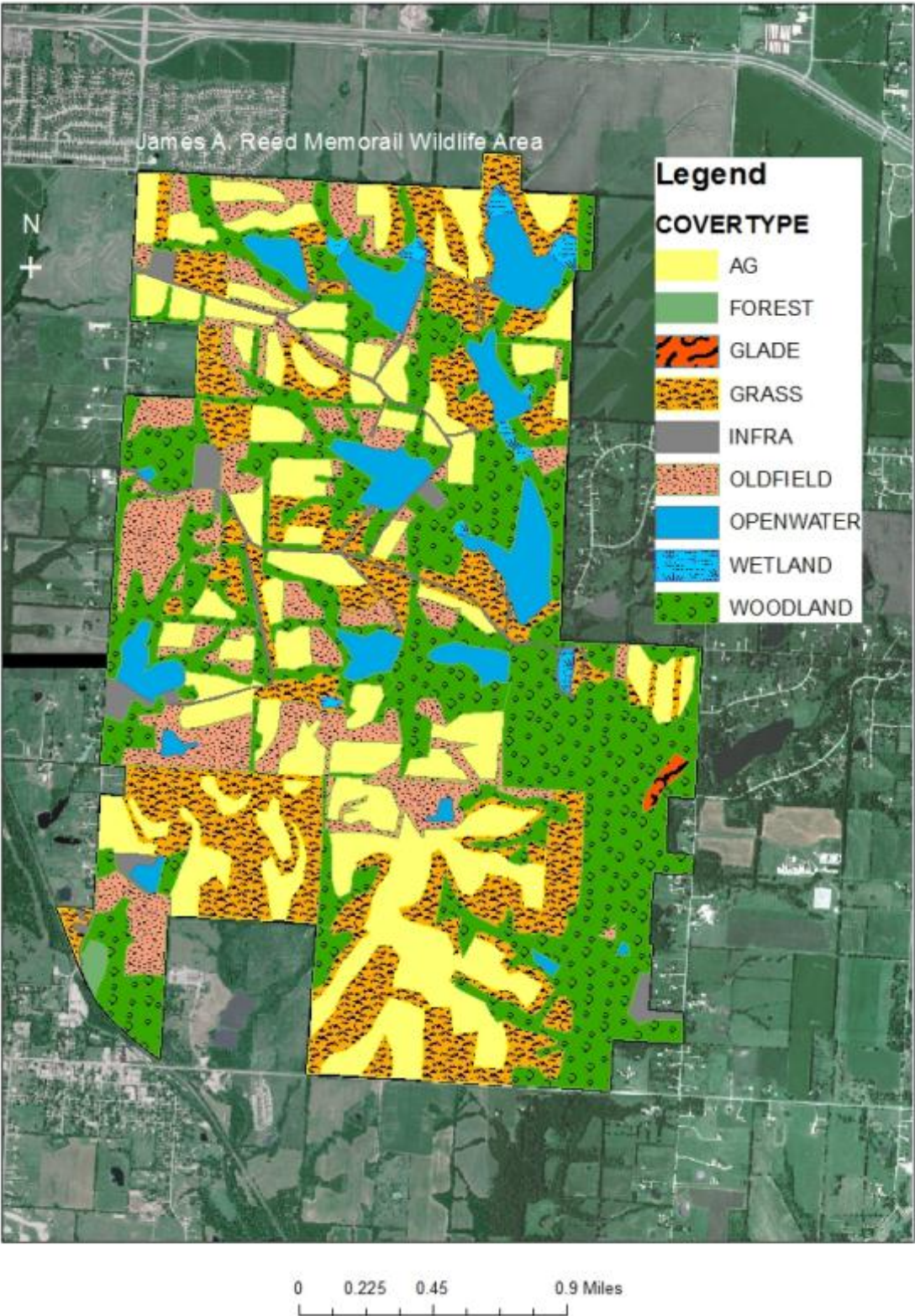


Figure 3: Topographic Map





**Figure 4: Current Vegetation Map**



## **Appendix A: Department Responses to Public Comments – James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage**

### **Background:**

Prior to writing the draft James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Management Plan, the Department conducted a public input process Sept. 1 – Nov. 30, 2014, as described on Page 16. Common themes heard during this idea gathering stage included comments regarding trails, suggestions for more frequent mowing around lakes, requests to allow canoes, kayaks and other watercraft, and general appreciation for the area. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they will be incorporated or why they will not be included, can be found below. Comments were grouped into general themes and addressed collectively.

### **Terrestrial Resource Management**

#### **Appreciates habitat management for dove, quail, rabbits and grassland birds.**

The area staff has been working to improve small game and grassland bird habitat throughout the wildlife area.

#### **Suggests more brush and weed removal for wildlife viewing.**

We remove portions of brush every year on the area while conducting wildlife habitat management activities. We will continue this process annually on different portions of the area for wildlife management needs.

#### **Suggests less row cropping and more wetlands.**

The area is managed for a variety of habitats, which includes a mix of woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, and agricultural and idle fields, to support many different wildlife species.

#### **Suggests releasing quail and pheasants on the area.**

The ring-necked pheasant's range in Missouri lies north of the Missouri River and includes most of the two northern tiers of counties bordering Iowa. They have failed to survive or expand outside of those counties. Further, the Department does not advocate the release of pen-reared birds as a viable technique for re-establishing or enhancing quail populations. Repeated research studies across many states have demonstrated that pen-raised quail survival is very poor, and typically fewer than 10 percent survive more than a month or so. It seems that pen-raised birds do not possess the innate wildness necessary to avoid the pitfalls that bobwhites face every day.

#### **Opposes tree harvesting (other than fallen trees on the trail).**

Tree removal is a tool used to enhance wildlife habitat. Harvest is also used to promote healthy trees and woodlands.

### **Aquatic Resource Management**

#### **Suggests reducing vegetation in lakes.**

The area staff have stocked grass carp and used herbicide on a limited basis. However, curly leaf pondweed, an invasive species, has been introduced into the area. This plant species is very hard to control. We have made some gains in managing it and will continue to try new ways to lessen the effects of this weed.

#### **Suggests stocking muskellunge and more redear sunfish.**

Large predators like muskellunge have been stocked in the past at the wildlife area, but did not do well. Large predator fish can only be stocked at low rates, especially in small bodies of water. The net result is that few survive. We do stock hybrid striped bass for a trophy fishery and they do well on the area. The redear sunfish population on the wildlife area is rated as *good to very good*. These populations are naturally reproducing and grow to a quality size. They are hard to catch; so they stay in the lakes/ponds longer and grow larger than bluegill.

#### **Suggests making one lake a trophy lake.**

Limited resources on the area must be managed for a variety of users. Trophy-sized and quality fish can be caught in any of the area fishing lakes. Through our management, we will continue to strive for that goal. Photos of some of the trophy fish that are caught on the area are displayed inside the front door of the regional office.

#### **Suggests feeding and restocking catfish lakes.**

Feeding fish, as was done in the past on the wildlife area, could improve the quality of individual fish at the area. However, applying enough feed to increase the size of the majority of fish in a large pond is quite costly and can lead to water quality issues and even fish kills. With good management, catfish can grow quite large on natural food items in the lake, with money going toward stocking fish rather than trying to feed all of them artificially.

All the wildlife area lakes, except Tanglewood Lake, are stocked with channel catfish each year. The area did have an extensive catfish program at one time. This program was discontinued due to problems including bank erosion, litter, social issues and the artificial nature of the program.

#### **Suggestions regarding boats on wildlife area lakes:**

- **Provide more boats for public use.**
- **Do not allow public boats on lakes.**
- **Allow kayaks, float tubes, canoes, kick boats and other human-powered watercraft on one or more lakes.**
- **Allow boats with trolling motors (with annual user fee permit).**

The use of private boats on the area's lakes is a complicated issue. Allowing personal boats would increase recreational opportunities on the area and offer a different fishing experience for area users. Users would not have to compete for the limited number of rental boats and would not have to worry about the condition of the rental boats and oars. Rental boats would still be available for those without a personal boat. Increased number of boaters would help manage overpopulated species such as crappie. However, staff have concerns about the increased possibility of invasive species being brought in by private boats and/or possible conflicts between boaters and other users. The area currently doesn't have boats ramps. Consequently, the increase in boat use may have an effect on existing infrastructure, banks, or may require new infrastructure to be built. There is a possibility of increased violations with boaters putting-in on non-designated lakes or driving across grassy areas, causing ruts or other damage. Most of the lakes are small and could not handle large numbers of boats at one time. Several nearby area lakes, such as Lone Jack Lake, Harrisonville North Lake, Amarugia Lake, and Prairie Lee Lake, allow private boats.

**Suggests allowing occasional night fishing.**

There are concerns with allowing late night fishing near a large metropolitan area. These include increases in trash, use of open fires, off-road driving and property destruction, safety of anglers, and people using lakes as party sites.

**Suggests special events for ADA-accessible fishing from pontoon boats.**

We have three ADA-accessible docks and five paved fishing jetties on the wildlife area. We also have many ADA-accessible fishing events at Prairie Hollow Lake on the area. The area lakes have poor access for launching large boats. It also has very limited places to safely load and unload anglers with disabilities. Other lakes in the metropolitan area are better equipped to handle larger boats and provide access for loading and unloading passengers with disabilities.

**Public Use Management**

**Trails**

**Suggestions regarding multi-use trails:**

- **Suggests adding more designated groomed multi-use trails.**
- **Appreciates trail upkeep.**
- **Suggests removing horse manure from roadways.**
- **Suggests adding designated mountain bike trail.**
- **Suggests no bikes off-road.**

Area regulations currently allow horseback riding, biking, and hiking on 15 miles of multi-use trails that are signed and maintained. These trails are mowed once a month during the growing season and limbs are cleared, as needed, around the trails. Users are responsible for picking up their own trash and waste. Designated trails allow staff to monitor trail conditions for erosion and maintain stream crossings on a regular basis. The area's public roadsides are also open to horseback riding, biking, and hiking, adding another 7 miles of opportunity. At this time, we are currently looking for ways to maintain the existing trails and other infrastructure more efficiently. We will evaluate opportunities to expand infrastructure when and where applicable.

**Suggests allowing horses on lake dams.**

Horse and bike traffic along the dams may result in conflicts with the fishing public. Also, horses entering lakes disrupt fishing activity, create the potential for erosion along the lake-side face of the dam and impact the drainage along the lakeside. These are all reasons the multi-use trails are designated below the lake dams.

**Suggests horse access south of Browning Road.**

The horse access south of Browning Road was never a part of the official multi-use trail. Staff provided a trail around the Greenwood Cemetery to provide safe passage for the public that wished to access the multi-use trails from points south of Browning Road.

**Suggests removing or capping horse tie-up pole for safety.**

We will look into securing the horse tie-up pole.

**Suggests horse crossing signs on Ranson and Browning Roads.**

We will discuss this with the Missouri Department of Transportation, Jackson County, City of Greenwood and the City of Lee's Summit to provide horse crossing signs along roadways next to the area.

**Suggests adding a connection to the Katy Trail and Lee's Summit trails.**

We have been in conversations in the past with the cities of Lee's Summit and Greenwood about potential connection to these trails; and will continue to discuss this in the future.

**Appreciates upkeep at Shawnee Trace Hiking Trail. Suggests updating and providing trail maps.**

We are looking at providing a map in the future.



**Suggests partnering with Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen to maintain and improve equestrian trails.**

We do have an adopt-a-trail program to accommodate groups that wish to improve and maintain existing trails on the area.

**Archery Range**

**Suggests more maintenance on the unmanned archery range. Suggests more shooting lanes. Appreciates archery range.**

The archery range has three upper targets and a 28-point walk-through range. We have started using better backstop material for the targets, which requires less maintenance in replacing target butts. The top portion of the range is mowed every other week. The lower 28-point walk-through course is mowed when conditions allow equipment access. The addition of three more upper targets is being considered.

**Suggests gate on archery range and questions whether range should be close to homes.**

The area including the range is closed from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. during daylight saving time and 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. otherwise. Area staff, the Jackson County Sheriff's Department and Greenwood Police Department patrol this area.

**Field Trials**

**Suggests improvements for retriever field trials and hunt tests.**

Staff has and will continue working with field trial groups to address issues and concerns with the grounds as they relate to field trials. We are looking into additional projects to improve the conditions of the area for dog training and field trial events. Because the wildlife area is a highly used public area, it is important to maintain a balance among the area's various users (e.g., field trial users, hikers, bird watchers, etc.) without restricting hunting and fishing activities.

**Area Maintenance**

**Suggests more mowing and landscaping. Can't see wildlife from the road because of too much brush. Suggests mowing grass near lakes more often and shorter.**

Wildlife habitat is managed for a variety of wildlife species around the area, which sometimes includes setting back succession (removing brush). Lake access trails are mowed twice per month during the growing season when conditions allow. This process will continue annually. Accesses, roadsides and trails are maintained for public access by frequently mowing and removing tree limbs.

**Suggests more trash cans and recycling bins.**

The area provides 13 trash bins at each of the major parking lots around the lakes. These provide opportunities for the public to dispose of their trash that has been generated on the area. Individuals are responsible to remove their litter from the area or be ticketed.

**Appreciates clean restrooms. Suggests a different lock type on privies so they don't get locked from the inside.**

We will look into solutions to address privy door issues.

**Roads**

**Appreciates the resurfaced roads for biking and walking. Suggests reducing speed limit on area roads.**

Vehicle speed on the area can be an issue at times. The staff works hard to reduce this issue by warning drivers not obeying the speed limits. The speed limit is enforced by Conservation Agents and patrolled on a regular basis.

**Suggests widening entrance.**

The Department widened the entrance last year and is looking at the s-curves for ways to mitigate issues.

**Suggests opening old entrance.**

The main entrance was moved to coordinate with the opening of the Kansas City Regional Office. This office became responsible for public contact at the wildlife area. One entrance and exit for the majority of the area provides the public better access to area information and notifications.

**Hunting**

**Suggests teaching hunter ethics on public lands.**

The Department provides hunter education programs that stress ethics in its curriculum. Hunter education is required for all people (born after 1967) purchasing a firearms hunting permit.

**Suggests a morning dove hunt instead of an evening hunt.**

The dove hunting times were set up, in part, with youth in mind. A morning hunt would exclude youth from hunting after school during the week.

**Suggests more youth and women hunting opportunities.**

The Department offers many opportunities for youth and women hunting workshops and events in the Kansas City Region. These events are posted online on the regional website.

**Concern with seeing fewer doves and rabbits. Suggests stopping dove hunting and rabbit hunting (until numbers rebound).**

Wildlife populations fluctuate year to year for a variety of reasons such as habitat changes, weather and nesting success. Staff monitor mourning dove and rabbit populations through surveys and harvest information to make management decisions based on the best scientific information available.

**Suggests fewer restrictions on waterfowl hunting. Would like to see waterfowl and pit blinds installed.**

The wildlife area provides opportunities for waterfowl hunting by reservation at designated times and locations until 1 p.m. The field hunting opportunities are selected next to the hunting pools. These restrictions in hours, dates, and locations were implemented to keep conflicts with other users at a minimum. The fields where waterfowl hunting opportunities rotate are used for multiple different activities. The creation of pit blinds (or other blinds) would not be conducive for this multiple use.

**Suggests banning lead shot for all shotgun hunting at area.**

The Department encourages the voluntary use of non-toxic shot through its Effective Wing Shooting program. This program helps shooters understand the impact of lead on wildlife and the different shooting properties of non-toxic shot. Federal law limits the use of lead shot in many situations to protect waterfowl and other wetland species that can ingest lead shot found in the soil and from eagles and other predators feeding on waterfowl that has ingested lead. The Department prohibits the use of lead shot on 21 conservation areas to protect wildlife and aquatic resources.

**Suggests more deer hunting opportunities. Appreciates managed deer hunts. Suggests closing area to other uses during managed hunts.**

This year, the wildlife area will have a 12-day archery and crossbow hunt and a five-day muzzleloader hunt. This is a change from previous years and removes one muzzleloader hunt. The deer management goal on the area, up until this year, has been to reduce numbers due to overabundant populations in and around the area. Surveys conducted over a period of time indicate that deer populations have been reduced. Thus, a reduction in managed hunts will help maintain the deer population at its current level and provide a better hunter success rate. The area is only closed to the public during the managed muzzleloader hunt and the area is open to the public during the managed archery hunt. Closing the area to the public during the archery hunt

has been done in the past. Due to low hunter participation throughout the day, we were unduly denying access to other area users.

### **Education/Interpretation**

#### **Suggests more interpretive opportunities inside the Kansas City Regional Office and outside the office, like Burr Oak Woods guided hikes.**

The Kansas City Regional Office is a business office. The office provides some interpretive opportunities in and around the office when possible, but space is limited. The wildlife area offers numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation and exploration.

#### **Suggests bird identification signs.**

The area provides a birding list on its website, which can be downloaded; or a copy can be obtained at the office.

#### **Suggests more school opportunity involvement on the area.**

The Department promotes utilization of the wildlife area by Kansas City area schools and universities for outdoor education and fishing opportunities at the Prairie Hollow Lake educational facility and on the entire area.

#### **Suggests more educational programing at area (e.g., youth and women hunting/fishing classes; guided interpretive hikes of birds, plant identification, etc.).**

In past years the area has hosted over 50 educational fishing programs annually. This past year we started the Discover Nature — Fishing Program. This program will replace most of the old fishing educational programs and create many new classes for all users. This will include classes ranging from basic fishing to specialized instruction (like fly tying and fly fishing). We also host Family Outdoors Day as a part of National Hunting and Fishing Day. This event gives all participants the chance to try many outdoor activities without financial investment.

### **Other**

#### **Suggests more accessible portions of area for visitors with mobility disabilities.**

The area has multiple ADA-accessible facilities (e.g., parking, privies, fishing docks, and jetties), which can be found on the area brochure.

#### **Suggests adding an area for off-leash dog opportunity.**

The area offers opportunities for hunting dog training with a small-game hunting permit at designated times and areas throughout the year. Area users have the opportunity to walk their

pets with a leash while on the area. There is a Lee's Summit dog park that offers off-leash opportunities directly adjacent to the northwest side of the area.

**Suggests opportunities for 5k runs.**

The Special Use Permit process allows us to review various activities and grant access for groups to participate in certain activities.

**Suggests providing walk-in camping opportunities.**

We limit camping to organized youth groups through a special use permit. There are 9 public and privately operated campgrounds within 30 miles of the James A Reed Wildlife Area for camping opportunities.

**Administrative Considerations**

**Suggests adding weekend hours to the Kansas City Regional Office.**

The Kansas City Regional Office is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and closed on holidays. The Department went through a period of downsizing in number of offices and staff. During that time, weekend office hours were cut.

**Suggests on-site vendor to sell bait, gear and concessions.**

When the Kansas City Regional Office was in the design stage, adding vendor space was considered, but the costs of providing space were too high. The Regional Office does provide a list and map of private vendors for bait and fishing gear at the outside kiosk with copies available in the office.

**Suggests more volunteer opportunities. Suggests incorporating Adopt-a-Lake Program for lake clean up.**

The Department provides multiple opportunities to volunteer. Department staff and community service programs currently provide lake cleanup at this time. We will look into the prospect of revising the Adopt-a-Lake Program in the future.

**Suggests bringing a decommissioned fire tower to the James A. Reed Memorial WA.**

There are no plans to bring a fire tower to this area.

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